

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD

**MAY 8, 2000**

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 p.m., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with Messrs. Bloomfield, Dale, Kreider, Raser, Senhauser and Mmes. Spraul-Schmidt, Sullebarger and Wallace present. Ms. Borys was absent.

## MINUTES

The minutes of the April 10, 2000 meeting were approved as amended (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Bloomfield).

## **NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION – SAMUEL AND SALLY WILSON HOUSE, 1502 ASTER PLACE. COLLEGE HILL**

Staff member Daniel Young showed the Board photographs of the Wilson House, College Hill, which has been proposed for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Young indicated that the property is being nominated for its significance to history for its role in the Underground Railroad. It has also been nominated for religion and education as the home of individuals active in the Presbyterian Church and who taught in the College Hill community. Staff recommended that the Board support the nomination for history and reduce the period of significance to 1849-52, when its contribution can be firmly documented.

Ms. Sullebarger expressed concern for the present condition of the exterior shown in the photographs, the later Queen Anne details and twentieth-century asbestos siding. There was general agreement that the text could be reduced significantly by focusing on the narrow significance and time frame.

Mary Ann Olding, who wrote the nomination, was present to answer questions from the Board. Ms. Olding said the present nomination had been reduced from the original draft, but that pertinent support material might be put into an addendum or footnotes rather than the text.

John T. O'Neil, the property-owner, has lived in the house since 1926. Much of what is known about the site and the Wilson family was discovered in a case of documents, curios and press clippings left in the house.

Carl Westmoreland, representing the Underground Railroad Museum, read a letter in support of the nomination for its role as a Station and for its value as a teaching tool in understanding that period of American history.

## **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Bloomfield) to support the nomination of the Samuel and Sally Wilson House, 1502 Aster Place, to the National Register of Historic Places in recognition of its significance as a "Station" on the Underground Railroad during the period of 1849-1852 and directed staff to forward the Board's support and comments to the Ohio Historic Preservation Office.



**PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW - 546-548 LIBERTY HILL STREET, PROSPECT  
HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam showed drawings of a proposed addition to 548 Liberty Hill Street to be constructed in the open lot at 546 Liberty Hill. She introduced Frank Russell and Marshall Campin, architects for the project, who presented a model of the addition.

Mr. Campin explained that the new two-story addition will contain the primary living quarters while the existing house will be redesigned to house bedrooms and service areas. The addition will be set deep in the lot, behind a series of terraces supported by rubble stone retaining walls. Its stucco walls and wood windows will reflect the materials of the present house and its modern rear addition. Mr. Russell said its shallow arching roofline and glazed atrium distinguish it as new construction. Inappropriate classical window pediments will be removed from 548 Liberty Hill; metal sash windows will be replaced with 1/1 wood units. The front roof deck will remain.

In response to Ms. Sullebarger, Mr. Campin said that few new openings would be made in the existing (former) party wall. He also said that the window openings in the first floor stone walls would be recessed two feet, so the glazing would not be highly visible from the street.

Ms. Spraul-Schmidt questioned the use of Dryvit on the new addition. Ms. Sullebarger asked the architects how the design met district guidelines in massing and scale. Mr. Russell responded that the addition is visually separated from the existing building by the glazed gallery and from the street by the terraced garden. The scale of the addition diminishes as it recedes from the street as an independent pavilion.

In answer to Mr. Kreider, Mr. Campin said there were no windows in the sidewall of the neighbor to the west that would be affected by the new addition. The owner of that rental property has not seen the plan, but Don Beck, owner of property to the east, has reviewed the scheme.

**MR. RASER JOINED THE MEETING**

Mr. Kreider said he was not thrilled with the arched roofline and felt the glazed opening needed greater definition. Mr. Bloomfield also expressed reservations about the curved roofline, but Mr. Senhauser said he was more concerned about the appearance and durability of the dryvit walls. Mr. Senhauser thought the new work was too complex and contained some awkward pieces. He suggested the architects restudy the proportions and rhythm of the addition to better reflect the simplicity of the original house. Mr. Dale agreed with Ms. Sullebarger that the rhythm, transparency and setback of the contemporary design were superior to other more literal historical imitations elsewhere in the district.

**BOARD ACTION**

No Board action was required.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS - 2929 ANNWOOD LANE, EAST WALNUT  
HILLS HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Daniel Young distributed photographs of the existing house and grounds and

a site plan of 2929 Annwood Lane showing a new deck and landscaping. Mr. Young explained that the lot is too shallow to accommodate outdoor living space in the rear yard, but the side yard is oversized. A grade terrace was considered, but the wood deck was chosen to span the root systems of several mature trees. Mr. Young said that the new deck will require no new railings and would be screened from the street by hedges and additional landscaping. The driveway will be relocated and a separate pedestrian walkway built. Mr. Young indicated that he had received five letters of support from neighboring property owners and no objections.

Project architect Daniel Sheehy was present to answer questions from the Board.

Mr. Raser expressed concern that the deck not be constructed so far above grade that it would require a railing. Ms. Sullebarger said that it is unusual to approve a side yard deck in this district, but in this circumstance, it was well screened and not highly visible from the street. Mr. Senhauser agreed that the wood deck was acceptable in order to protect the trees.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Bloomfield, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a ground-level, wooden deck/terrace in the side yard of 2929 Annwood Lane on the condition that the landscaping be implemented and maintained.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS – 539 MILTON STREET, PROSPECT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam showed photographs of 539 Milton Street and plans of the proposed work. Work includes masonry repair, window replacement and the expansion of a rear deck. The brick will be repointed and repainted; the existing 6/6 wood windows will be replaced with 2/2 aluminum clad wood windows. Ms. Kellam said that the two-story rear deck will be removed and replaced with a new three-story deck 5 feet deeper than the existing; a new stair will be built and two windows will be converted to doors to access the expanded deck. On the front slope of the roof, two skylights will be added and a wood screen wall constructed to conceal existing mechanical equipment.

Project architect Tom Wilcox was present to represent the owner and answer questions from the Board. Mr. Wilcox indicated that the new skylights will not be highly visible from the street. He said the new doors leading to the deck will be aluminum clad wood, custom-made to match the muntin pattern of the existing windows.

In answer to Mr. Raser, Mr. Wilcox indicated that he had considered a single run stair, but it did not fit well on the site. Mr. Senhauser objected to the proposed rooftop screen wall. Mr. Wilcox responded that the new wall would be covered in shingle to match the existing roof. Mr. Kreider suggested that the AC condensers be relocated to the rear deck or the back slope of the gable roof. Mr. Wilcox responded that the existing ductwork would be reused in place so that relocating the AC condensers would be a needless expense.

Ms. Sullebarger made a motion that the application be approved on the condition that the mechanical equipment be relocated from the roof and both the screen wall and the skylights be deleted from the plan. It was not seconded.



### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Bloomfield, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed window replacement, construction of a new deck and stair assembly, installation of skylights, masonry repair and other minor related changes to the rear façade of 539 Milton Street on the condition that the roof mounted mechanical equipment be relocated off the roof and out of view from the street and that final plans for the work be approved by the Urban Conservator prior to the issuance of a building permit and the commencement of construction.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS – 1846 KEYS CRESCENT, EAST WALNUT HILLS HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam showed photographs of 1846 Keys Crescent and elevation drawing showing proposed window replacements. The new windows are to be multi-paned casements; however, except for a pair of casements on the front porch, all existing windows are wood 8/1 sash. Ms. Kellam said the applicant contended that the windows were contaminated with lead and are energy inefficient. She indicated that work had begun without a permit; on the rear elevation a window had been replaced, a door converted to a window and a rear porch roof removed. It was staff's opinion that the proposed work did not meet the district guidelines. No one had attended the pre-hearing.

Eric Puryear of Beck Architecture was present to answer questions from the Board. Ms. Sullebarger said that the 8/1 sash windows were a character-defining element in the design and suggested that the windows could be encapsulated as an alternative to removal and replacement. Mr. Puryear responded that his firm was new to the project and had not discussed this possibility with his client.

Ms. Sullebarger made a motion (second by Kreider) to deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed replacement windows and require that the original windows and other architectural elements lost or modified on the rear façade be reconstructed.

Mr. Bloomfield questioned whether the work on the rear of the building was legal. Ely Ryder, council to the Board, agreed that the Department of Buildings & Inspections should investigate the situation and, if appropriate, issue orders against the building. Ms. Sullebarger withdrew her motion in favor of the replacement motion by Mr. Bloomfield.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Bloomfield, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to table the motion until the applicant could provide more complete information on the work already executed and clarification by the Department of Buildings & Inspections as to the status of the building permit and legality of the work in place.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AND ZONING VARIANCE – 2230 AUBURN AVENUE, AUBURN AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam showed photographs of the front of 2230 Auburn Avenue and a rendering of a proposed new ground sign. She indicated that the owner proposes to remove the existing ground sign, replace it with a new freestanding sign and add a 2' x 2' wall-mounted directional sign. The new ground sign will be larger (in area), taller and

contain more tenant names than permitted by zoning, so will require variances for these conditions. Staff recommended that the sign be reduced in size and height. In response to Mr. Kreider, Ms. Kellam confirmed that the landscape screening met the guidelines, but had not been well maintained.

Mr. Robert Rice of United Signs was present to represent the owner and answer questions from the Board. He said that the existing sign conforms to zoning, but is partially obscured by a bus stop kiosk. Mr. Rice argued that a larger sign (with multiple doctors listed) was justified since many of his client's patients have poor vision and identify the building by their physicians' names.

Mr. Senhauser, said the proposed sign is really an advertising, not a way-finding, sign; he suggested that the street number be moved to the top of the sign and the text reduced. Mr. Rice agreed to relocate the street number to the top of the sign. Mr. Rice also showed a sketch site plan and agreed to replace the overgrown bushes with low level shrubs on 12" centers. Mr. Bloomfield said that the applicant needed to provide a detailed site plan showing new landscaping and that the existing plantings detract from the district.

Ms. Sullebarger said that the sign should be kept to the maximum size allowed by zoning and that a variance was not justified as being in the interest of historic preservation. Mr. Dale stated that the Board needed a good and valid reason to approve a zoning variance and this was not a unique situation on the street. Mr. Senhauser advised the applicant to return to the Board when he could make a case that granting the required zoning variances would be in the interest of historic preservation and the neighborhood.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Sullebarger, second by Kreider) to table the motion until the applicant can provide an acceptable (professionally prepared) landscape plan, a revised design for the sign that would address the concerns expressed by the Board and a more compelling justification for the requested zoning variances.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AND ZONING VARIANCE - 1883 MADISON ROAD, EAST WALNUT HILLS HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam indicated that the proposal to construct a new attached garage at 1883 Madison Road had been reviewed by the Board at its April 24, 2000 meeting. At that meeting, the adjoining property owners to the east expressed concerns that the new construction be sufficiently screened and landscaped to protect their properties. The Board tabled its consideration to allow the parties time to come to some accord on this issue.

Mr. Dale recused himself since he had not been in attendance at the April 24 meeting.

The owners Tim and Peg Matile, their attorney Francis Barrett, their architects Chris Kepes and Rick Koehler and their landscape architect Steve Smith were present to answer questions from the Board. Mr. Barrett stated that the applicant and neighbors had reached an agreement regarding the issues left unresolved at the April 24 meeting; a formal written agreement will be prepared for signature. He said the neighbors now support the plan. Mr. Barrett reminded the Board that the location of the new garage is the most feasible and logical and that there are other examples in the district of garages and parking in the front yard of residences.





**BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted six in favor, one (Raser) against, one (Dale) abstaining, (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Bloomfield) and took the following actions:

1. Approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a three-car attached garage, driveway, and landscaping at 1883 Madison Road on the condition that
  - a) final plans and specifications for the garage and all associated site work and landscaping be approved by the Urban Conservator prior to construction and
  - b) that any other work on the house or elsewhere on the site be submitted to the Historic Conservation Board for further review and approval for a Certificate of Appropriateness.
2. Approved a zoning variance for the side yard setback to allow the construction of the garage as proposed, finding that such relief from the literal implication of the Zoning Code:
  - a) is necessary and appropriate in the interest of historic conservation so as not to adversely affect the historic architectural, or aesthetic integrity of the district; and
  - c) will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare or injurious to property in the district or vicinity where the property is located.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned.

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William L. Forwood  
Urban Conservator

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John C. Senhauser  
Chairman

Date\_\_\_\_\_